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AUTHOR	Trotter, Jennie C.
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ABSTRACT

Angry children need to learn positive expressions of anger, and adults need to accept the angry feelings while teaching children proper ways to express feelings. This guide for classroom use explains that there are good and bad ways to express anger. How students can communicate when angry is explored. It is important to remind students that they are in charge of their feelings. Some ways to get anger out are portrayed in cartoon figures acting out acceptable releases of emotion. (SLD)

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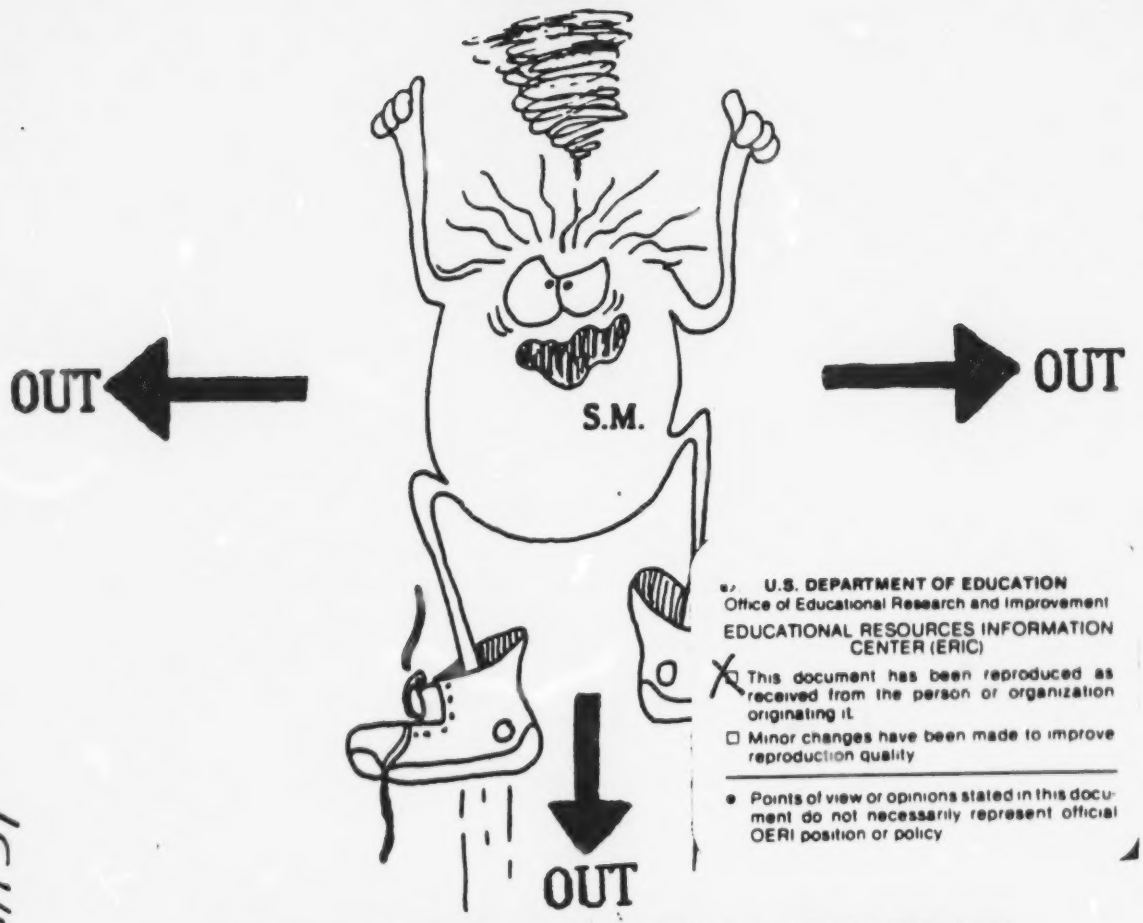
HOW TO GET ANGER



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CLASSROOM EXERCISES FOR POSITIVE ANGER RELEASE

UD031131

By JENNIE C. TROTTER, M.ED.

Illustrations by LINDA BATEMAN

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J. Trotter
Wholistic Stress Cntrl. Inst

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Children and Anger

Dealing with children s anger can be very challenging for adults. Often times, confronting this situation stirs up anger feelings in the adult. Most adults have not been taught how to deal with anger as a fact of life during their childhood. Old teachings believed that to be angry was to be bad, and one was often made to feel guilty for expressing anger. This notion has to be destroyed. The goal is not to repress or destroy anger feelings, but to accept the feelings as normal and help learn positive outlets for release.

Children should be allowed to express their feelings and should be taught healthy expressions of their feelings. Anger outbursts are not necessarily serious problems, but they do need to be recognized and addressed with sensitivity.

It is important to distinguish between anger and aggression. Anger is a temporary emotional state caused by frustration. Aggression is often an attempt to hurt a person or to destroy property.

It is important in looking at aggressive behavior in children that one distinguish between behavior that indicates emotional problems and behavior that is normal.

Angry children need to learn positive expressions of anger rather than to be punished. As adults we can accept the angry feelings from the child, but we must teach them proper ways to express these feelings.

Responding to the Angry Child

Some of the following suggestions for dealing with the angry child were taken from The Aggressive Child by Fritz Redd and David Wineman.

1. Provide physical outlets and other alternatives for positive expression
2. Manipulate the surroundings.
3. Ignore inappropriate behavior that can be tolerated.
4. Catch the child being good and tell the child what behaviors please you.
5. Use closeness and touching.
6. Ease tension through humor.
7. Be ready to show affection.
8. Express interest in the child's activities.
9. Talk directly to the child.
10. Explain the situation.
11. Use physical restraint.
12. Focus on their strengths and build positive images.
13. Use promises and rewards.
14. Establish limits and say no!
15. Share your behavior expectations.
16. Teach children how to express themselves verbally.
17. Accept children's feelings.
18. Model appropriate behaviors.
19. Develop respect in the child.
20. Use punishment cautiously.

WHAT IS ANGER?

Anger is a powerful feeling that everyone has at one time or another. We experience anger when we face frustrating or stressful situations.

IS IT O.K. TO FEEL ANGRY?

Yes, anger is a normal feeling and it is not unusual to feel angry at someone or something.

WHAT CAUSES ANGER?

We experience anger when we are facing frustrating or stressful situations. There are many causes for anger.

- People who don't do what we want them to do.
- Situations that don't turn out the way we want them to.
- Not acting the way we think we should. Sometimes we get angry with ourselves.

Some feelings that cause anger are:

- Humiliation - when someone calls you a name.
- Disappointment - when something you expect to happen doesn't happen the way you thought it would.
- Envy - when someone has something you want.
- Sadness or Hurt - when someone is mean to you.
- Frustration - when you can't get something right.
- Dependency - when you need something or someone.
- Harrassment - when someone keeps bothering you.

Anger is also associated with failure, low self-esteem and feelings of isolation, or it may be related to anxiety about situations over when a person has no control. Anger can also be a defense to avoid painful feelings.

IS ANGER GOOD OR BAD?

Anger is a feeling, and it serves as a signal to let us know that something is wrong. Our actions can make it good or bad. In other words, there are good ways of expressing anger and bad ways of expressing anger.

It is important to know that anger is a strong feeling that needs to be expressed. It is not good to keep our angry feelings inside us. Sometimes keeping angry feelings inside our bodies can make us sick, have accidents, feel bad, or block communications. It is better to release anger in a positive way.

WHAT ARE SOME WAYS TO EXPRESS ANGER?

Anger can be expressed positively or negatively. Anger can be expressed as a positive force to help improve situations we don't like. For example:

Some students who were angered by their school lunch menu decided to hold a strike and then met with the principal to change the menu to include some of their favorite foods.

On the other hand, anger can be expressed as a negative force to help destroy situations that we don't like. For example:

Some students who were angered by their school lunch menu decided to throw their food on the floor.

Negative expressions of anger do not solve the problem, but only serve to create other problems. Throwing the food on the floor did not address the real problem. Students who were responsible for these actions had to clean up their mess. This action did not help them address the problem of getting the school lunch changed, but served to increase the anger between the students and the school administration.

WHAT ARE SOME BAD WAYS OF EXPRESSING ANGER?

Bad ways of expressing anger can be very negative, destructive and hurting. Bad expressions of anger are caused by people acting without thinking about the situation. Bad expressions of anger usually cause violence and do not solve problems. Some examples of BAD EXPRESSIONS OF ANGER are:

- hitting
- kicking
- cursing
- fighting
- threatening
- throwing

WHAT ARE SOME GOOD WAYS OF EXPRESSING ANGER?

Good ways of expressing anger can be very positive, constructive, and healthy for us. Good expressions of anger are caused by people thinking first before acting, or by people blowing off some steam in a positive way. Some examples of GOOD EXPRESSIONS OF ANGER are:

- count to ten
- take a walk
- take a deep breath
- talk it over
- do some exercise
- punch a pillow or bag
- kick a pillow
- make some faces
- blow it out
- tell a joke
- think of something funny
- scream out loud
- scribble on some paper and tear it up
- talk to an empty chair
- wring a wet rag
- squeeze a teddy bear
- tear up some newspaper or old magazine
- squeeze a ball
- chew some gum
- stomp it out
- slam a door
- sit on a balloon
- pull or stretch cloth or a toy
- squeeze some play dough
- pound clay
- listen to some music
- dance to some music
- jump rope
- make some growl sounds
- write an angry letter
- hammer a nail
- make huff and puff sounds
- tense and relax your muscles

CREDIT

Many of these ideas are taken from Susan El-Shan's book 28 Ways to Vent Anger, produced by Crescent Publications, P.O. Box 2495, Bloomington, IN 47402.

CLASSROOM IDEAS AND DISCUSSION TOPICS

1. Have students discuss some situations that have made them angry.
2. Have a discussion with students about negative ways and positive ways to release anger.
3. Have students talk about the consequences of negative expressions of anger and the rewards of positive expressions of anger.
4. Have students role play some positive expressions of anger.
5. Make copies of pictures in this booklet and distribute to students for coloring activity or poster making. Collect all pictures and put the ways together on a poster with the title "Positive Ways to Get Anger Out." Refer to this poster and the ways to handle anger when any anger situation arises in the classroom.
6. Discuss with students the importance of dealing with one's anger in an appropriate manner and not suppressing it.

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7. Explain to students the importance of talking the problem over with someone or seeking help after blowing off steam in a positive way.
8. Set up an Anger Bag [ANGER] in the classroom after the lesson. Obtain a brown paper bag and put the following items in the bag: a ball, pencil, marker and paper, play dough or clay, newspaper or old magazines, a plastic jar, an old towel to squeeze, a plastic mirror, a pillow to punch (make an angry face on the pillow and write "punch me"), a teddy bear, a jump rope, etc. On the the bag put the following:

   ANGER BAG
   Things to do to get your anger out inside this bag. Please use!

   Set up your own rules for use of this area. You may refer students to this area or you may encourage students to use the bag during their free time so that they can become familiar with some tools to release anger.
9. Role Playing Ideas.
   On the following pages, S.M. (Stress Mess) is demonstrating some positive releases for anger. Teachers are encouraged to make copies of these pictures and distrib... to students for role play exercise and poster activity.

HOW DO YOU COMMUNICATE WITH SOMEONE WHEN YOU ARE ANGRY?

Sometimes it is hard to talk with someone when you are angry. It may be better to do one of the positive anger release exercises first. For example, breathe deeply, take a walk, count to ten, etc. You should be ready to talk over the problem. Here are some steps to follow to ensure positive communication with someone who has made you angry.

First, let the person know how you feel.
Second, let the person know what they did that caused your anger, and
Third, let them know what could be done to correct the situation.
For example, someone steps on your toe without saying anything.

Your response:
1. I feel angry.
2. When you step on my toe without saying anything.
3. I want you to be more careful or I want you to watch where you are going.

Positive communication enables the person to express what one is feeling, the cause of their anger, and what one would like to see done. It helps the person identify one s feelings without judging the other person.

Think of some situations that made you angry, and use the three steps for positive communication.

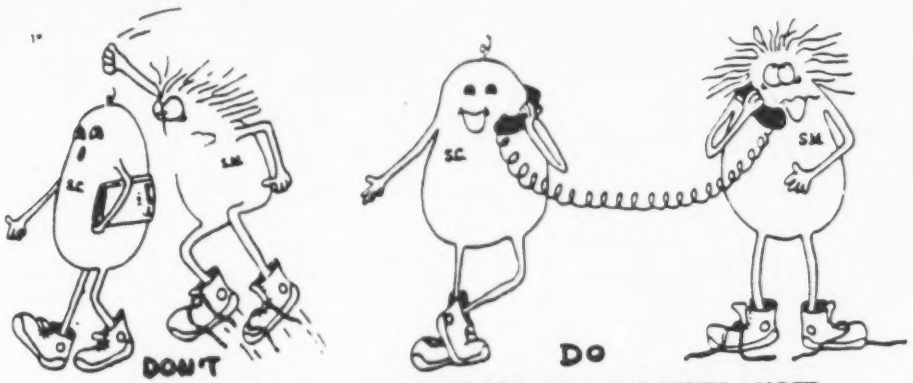
Remember:

Step #1: Let the person know how you feel.
I feel _____

Step #2: Let the person know what she/he did that caused you anger.
When you _____

Step #3: Let the person know what you want to happen.
I want _____

If you are not used to assertively expressing your anger, it is suggested that you practice regularly using these steps.



IMPORTANT DO'S AND DON'TS FOR DEALING WITH ANGER

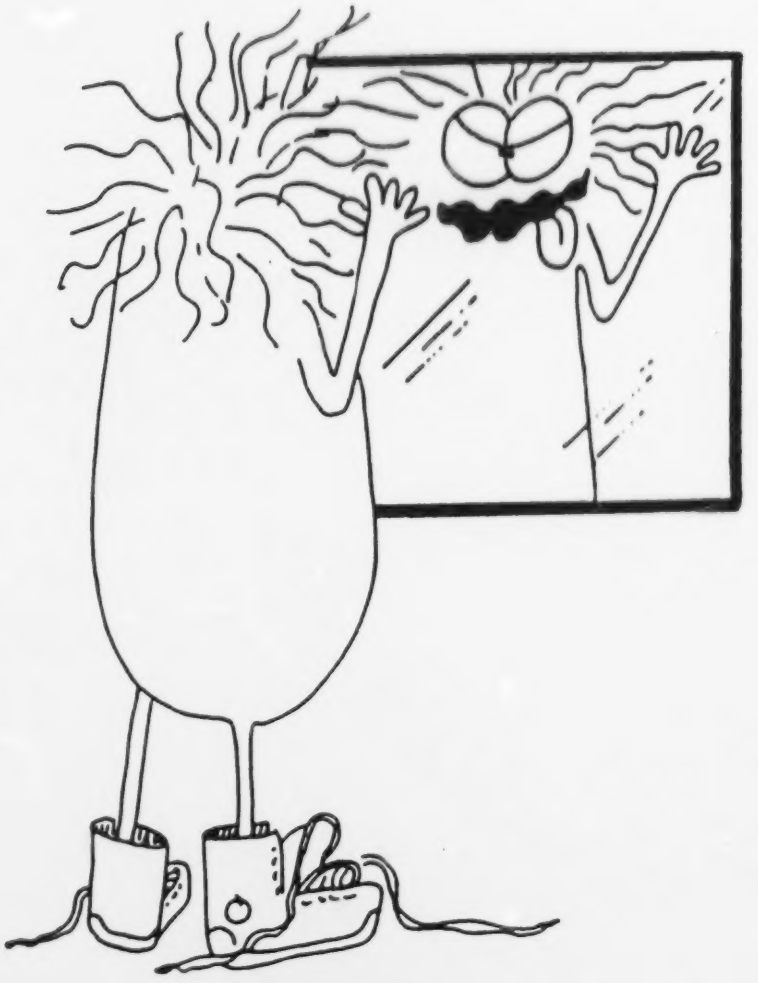
1. Do recognize when you are angry!
   Watch your body signs. Your body will let you know when you are getting angry. For example, look out for heavy breathing, tense muscles, and loud voice tone.
2. Do find the cause!
   Check around and see what is making you angry. What happened? What did you forget to do, or what did someone do to you?
3. Do decide how to handle it!
   Do you need to take a break in order to calm down before you handle it? Take some deep breaths or take a walk. Decide what will be the best way to handle it. Think before you act. What will be the consequences of your action? Can you talk about it with someone?
4. Don't avoid the problem.
   Don't keep your angry feelings pent up inside you. This can make you sick or make you feel badly. Don't sulk or continue to stay angry about the situation. Don't make threats. This does not address the problem. Don't let your anger control you. Remember, you are in charge of your feelings.

SOME WAYS TO GET ANGER OUT!

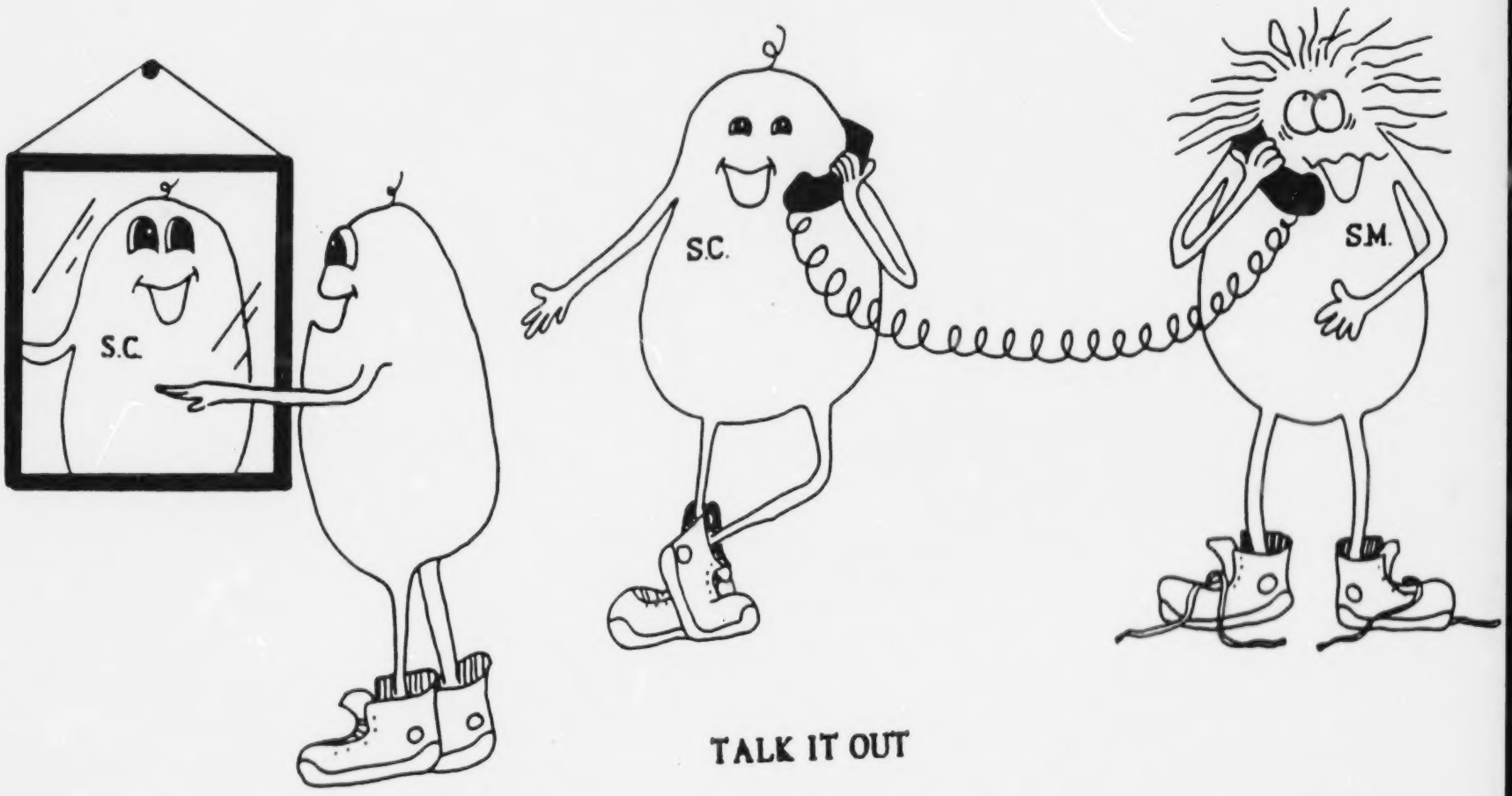
BEAT CLAY

ANGER STOMP

PUNCH A PILLOW



MAKE FACES



TALK IT OUT

MAD GROWL

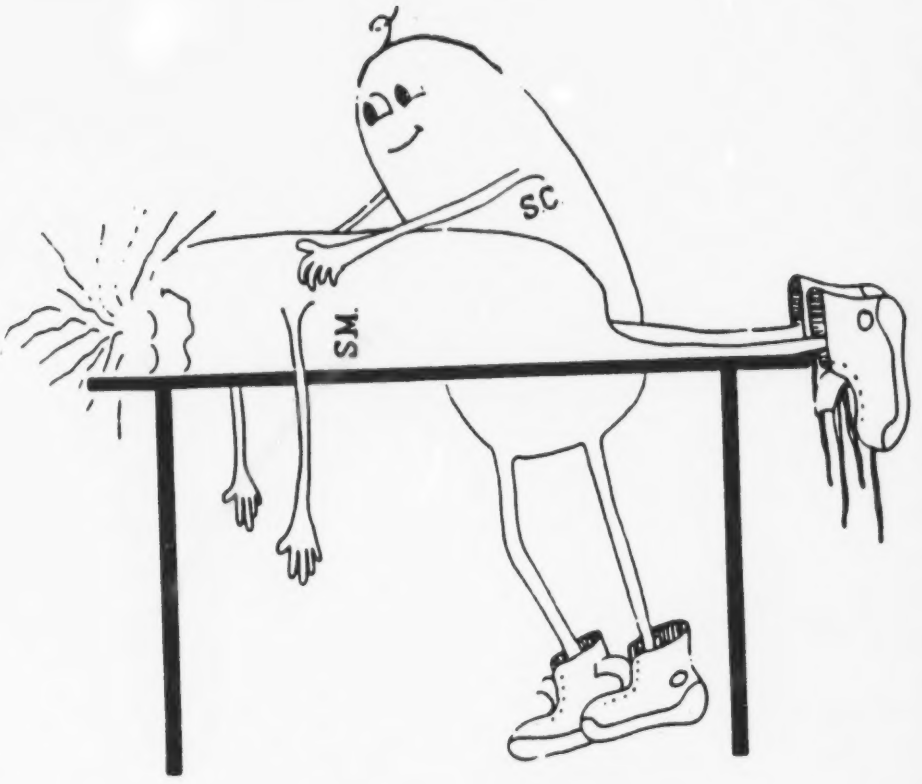
ANGER SCREAM

ANGER STOMP

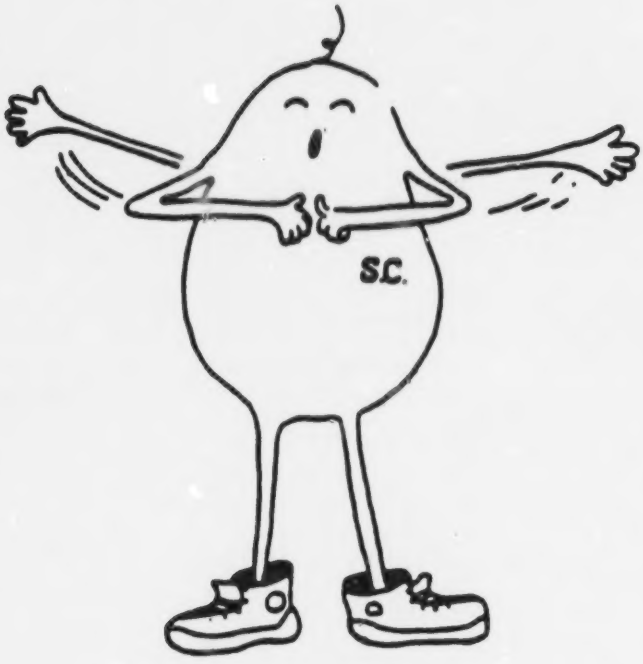
MAD DANCE

TEAR NEWSPAPER

Cool Out



SOFT RUB



Take a Deep Breath and Blow It Out!

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DRAW A PICTURE OF YOUR FAVORITE WAY TO GET ANGER OUT!

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